

**Weekly Status & Information Report:
Week of November 15, 2004**

1. **Long Branch Task Force (Ward 5):** The Long Branch Task Force heard two panels presenting information on transportation issues at its November meeting. Information on pedestrian safety, Ride-On buses and the Bi-County Transitway/Purple Line were highlights. Long Branch banners are being installed this week along sections of Piney Branch Road, Flower Avenue and University Boulevard. *(Community & Government Liaison)*
2. **Bus Transit Center (Ward 6):** The need for a bus transit center in the Takoma/Langley Crossroads area was the main topic of discussion at Thursday's Semi-Annual meeting of the Takoma/Langley Crossroads Development Authority. City Manager Barb Matthews presented the case for a transit center and City Councilmember Doug Barry, Mayor Kathy Porter, State Delegate Peter Franchot (Dist. 20), State Senator Gwendolyn Britt (Dist. 47), and Prince George's County Councilmember-elect Will Campos all spoke to the issue. Peter Franchot stated that this issue would be his top priority. He pledged to work to ensure that some form of a shelter would be installed for persons waiting for a bus near the Rite Aid on University Boulevard by the end of January and that a commitment to a transit center would be made by the end of the State Legislative Session in April. All speakers acknowledged the leadership of the CDA's President Neel Teague and Executive Director Erwin Mack in bringing this issue to the attention of the various governmental authorities. *(Community & Government Liaison)*
3. **Residents' Committee on TASDI (All Wards):** Jim Peck of the Maryland Municipal League and Sunil Pandya of the Montgomery County Office of Budget and Management gave very interesting and informative presentations to the Residents' Committee on Tax and Service Duplication Issues on Nov. 17. The presentations were broadcast on City TV, Channel 13. The session will be rebroadcast several times and the videotape will be available to borrow from the library. Councilmembers, residents and staff interested in the history of double taxation in Maryland are encouraged to watch Jim Peck's presentation. *(Community & Government Liaison)*
4. **Street Improvements (Wards 2 & 4):** Milling and repaving occurred on Central Avenue, Cherry Avenue, Devonshire Avenue and a section of Ritchie Avenue this week. One block of Central Avenue, from Jackson to Garland Avenue, required more extensive milling (6 inches) due to the lack of road base. Work is continuing on this block through Friday and may extend into Saturday. *(Public Works)*
5. **Police Shift Changes:** Shift changeover occurred last weekend. The day shift will be Squads 1 (Sgt. Bowers) and 3 (Sgt. Frishkorn) with Squads 2 (Sgt. Hammond) and 4 (Sgt. Skibicki) on night shift. This should be taken into consideration when initiating communication through the next six weeks (until Dec. 27). *(Police)*
6. **An Officer in Iraq:** Cpl. Tyrone Collington has been called to active military service as an element of his U.S. Army Reserves service. His activation of 545 days is expected to include service in Iraq. *(Police)*
7. **Officers in Training:** Last week, eight officers attended Preliminary Breath Testing training, a skill used in traffic enforcement for alcohol violations. This week two officers attended MD LEO training on improvised explosive devices and the AMBER alert system. Three officers attended EVOC training (Emergency Vehicle Operations). Five employees attended training/demonstration for municipal agencies on E-Justice, held by the County. This was our "final review" of the records management system Montgomery County will be activating in 2005. TTPD will now be able to compare E-Justice to other available software systems before selecting a records management system, a major and vital strategic decision and costly investment. *(Police)*

8. **Police Audit:** Inspectors from the Maryland State Police conducted a routine four-day audit of TPD records to assure compliance with federal UCR (Uniform Crime Reporting) statistics. A detailed report to the department is forthcoming. *(Police)*

9. **Governor's Annual Housing Conference:** HCD Staff attended the Annual Governors Housing Conference in Baltimore on November 16th. The Community Legacy Awards, originally scheduled to be announced at the conference, were delayed until later this year. *(Housing and Community Development)*

10. **Arts and Humanities Commission Community Meeting and Ice Cream Social:** The AHC hosted a community meeting and ice cream social at Columbia Union College on Tuesday, November 9, to gather additional input on how the Commission and the City might enhance arts and humanities offerings available to Takoma Park residents. Nineteen people were in attendance. Additional information on the progress the Commission has made in the development of the cultural plan will be provided at the November 22nd Council meeting. *(Housing and Community Development)*

11. **East Hampshire Center (Ward 3):** City staff recently learned that the Montgomery County Planning Board granted an extension to East Hampshire Place, a self-storage facility that would be located at the intersection of New Hampshire Avenue and Eastern Avenue. The City had not been notified that this preliminary plan extension was on the planning board agenda in late September. A letter signed by Mayor Porter and Councilmember Williams has been sent to Planning Board Chair Derick Berlage requesting that the Planning Board reconsider the extension that was granted to East Hampshire Center on the grounds that neither the City nor the community were notified and that current rules require that commercial developments go through a site plan review process that is more rigorous than the preliminary plan review that took place for this project in 2001. The reconsideration request is likely to be taken up by the Planning Board at their meeting on December 2 or 9. If the reconsideration request is granted, the extension granted to East Hampshire Center will be voided and a new hearing will be scheduled to consider the developer's extension request. *(Housing and Community Development)*

12. **University and New Hampshire Roadway Improvements (Ward 6):** Planning staff met with representatives of the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) on Thursday to review the agency's plans for improvements in the Takoma Langley Crossroads area. The project - which runs along University Blvd from Piney Branch Road to 14th Ave and on New Hampshire Ave from Holton Lane to just past Merrimac Drive - provides for a number of improvements designed to enhance pedestrian safety efforts in the area and includes the installation of six foot high metal fences in the medians along both University Blvd and New Hampshire Ave. Additional information on the proposed improvements will be presented to the Council for consideration during the November 22nd worksession. *(Housing and Community Development)*

13. **Impact Silver Spring Community Empowerment Leadership Program:** Applications for the leadership development and Community action training program offered by Impact Silver SPRING are due Wednesday, December 1st. If you are interested in applying, additional information can be found on their website at <http://www.impactsilverspring.org> *(Housing and Community Development)*

14. **Outreach:** On October 29, TGIF (Thank Goodness It's Friday) went to the East County Community Center for their yearly haunted house. Twenty-five Takoma Park youth in grades 6-8 participated. This program has been averaging 25 kids every Friday night. *(Recreation)*

15. **Soul Steppers:** This past weekend fifteen (out of a total of 30) of the Takoma Park Soul Steppers attended the National Youth Step Conference, held at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA. The Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc. hosted the event which taught the participants technical skills as well as encouraged them to be persistent in their goals to attend college and pursue business opportunities. *(Recreation)*

16. **Pee Wee Basketball:** The Recreation Department's Pee Wee Basketball Program ends this Sunday, November 21. Twenty two 1st and 2nd grade boys and girls are well on their way to becoming practitioners of the fine art of roundball! *(Recreation)*

17. **Youth Exposed to Success:** The Recreation Department's Y.E.S. (Youth Exposed to Success) Program's second winter season starts November 29. Last year's inaugural season had 41 9th - 12th grade kids participate in it. We hope to bring at least 60 kids in this year. *(Recreation)*

18. **Afternoon Addition:** The after school program is getting a special visit from the Mad Science Group, who will be talking to the kids about polymers. They will get a chance to make slime! Next Tuesday, November 22, the Afternoon Addition will be holding its first ever International Pot Luck. The families of the participants are asked to bring their favorite dish or a dish from their native country. *(Recreation)*

19. **Recreation Winter Guide:** Please keep an eye for our Winter Guide! We have a lot of new programs to share with the community of Takoma Park, ie. a Theater Program for Middle School Kids, African Dance, Voice, and Massage for Couples. *(Recreation)*